

B. Painting and Sculpture

532 1. Development up to the first World War.

217 The palaces of the Radvilas, of the Paz, of the Sapiehas, and many others today lie in ruins. Only one or the other ruin still reminds one in its gigantic proportions of the power of the earlier lords of the land. With the castles of Lithuania, the precious store of pictures which they contained was also destroyed at the same time. Thus in 1830 the picture gallery of Princess Sapieha went up in flames. The art collection of the Radvilas, too, was half destroyed. The uprising /171/ of the year 1863 destroyed the most valuable portion of the archaeological collection of the Museum of Vilna. Valuable objects of art were removed by the Russians to St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Kiev, where they were exhibited in galleries, if they were not burned; the last happened, for example, to the remains of the Sapieha gallery, at the command of Czar Nicolas I. The first World War, however, brought with it the greatest destruction. With it a centuries old tradition was carried to the grave, never to be reawakened to life.

532 For these reasons the new Lithuanian painting grew in a completely independent soil, without tradition or connection with the artistic past of the country. The young Lithuanian painters sought and found the soul of their people in the nature of their homeland and in their heroic past. Sometimes they also built further along the line of the old peasant folk art, which extends into our own time. Around the turn of the nineteenth century /sic/ artistic life in Lithuania achieved its first blossoming. In the year 1907 the first Lithuanian art society was founded in Vilna.

532 In order to understand the beginning of Lithuanian artistic life, which was concentrated in the
186 old capital of the country, one must consider to what extent this spiritual life--no matter whether